

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-82 were previously pending in the application. Claims 15 and 55 are canceled; and claims 1, 8, 16, 19, 22, 28, 34, 41, 48, 56, 60, 63, 68, 74, and 78 are amended herein. Assuming the entry of this amendment, claims 1-14, 16-54, and 56-82 are now pending in the application. The Applicant hereby requests further examination and reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and these remarks.

Independent claims 1, 8, 16, 22, 28, 34, 41, 48, 56, 63, 68, 74, and 78 have been amended to recite that the timer "generates values in a count sequence," rather than that the timer "counts up to n counts" (as in original claims 1, 16, 22, 28, 34, 41, 56, 68, and 78) or that the timer "performs a count sequence up to n counts" (as in original claims 8, 48, 63, and 74). The purpose of these amendments is to avoid the possibility of interpretation of the scope of the claims being limited to covering only timers that count up as opposed to timers that count down. Since the present invention can also be implemented using timers that count down, the independent claims have been amended to cover such implementations, as well as those implementations using timers that count up. Claims 19 and 60 have been amended to conform to the amendments of claim 16 and 56. None of these amendments have been made to overcome any prior-art rejections.

In paragraph 4 of the office action, the Examiner stated that claims 10, 14, 48, and 54 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nagata in view of Holden. The Applicant assumes that the Examiner intended to reject claims 8, 14, 48, and 54.

In paragraph 5, the Examiner stated that claims 1-7, 16-47, and 63-81 were allowed. The Applicant assumes that the Examiner intended to allow claims 1-7, 16-47, and 56-82.

In paragraph 6, the Examiner objected to claims 9-13, 15, 49-53, and 55 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that those claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

For the following reasons, the Applicant submits that all of the now-pending claims are allowable over the cited references.

Claim 8 has been amended to include the features of previously pending claim 15. As such, currently amended claim 8 is equivalent to previously pending claim 15 rewritten in independent form. Since the Examiner stated that previously pending claim 15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, the Applicant submits that currently amended claim 8 is allowable. Since claims 9-14 depend from claim 8, it is further submitted that those claims are also allowable.

Claim 48 has been amended to include the features of previously pending claim 55. As such, currently amended claim 48 is equivalent to previously pending claim 55 rewritten in independent form. Since the Examiner stated that previously pending claim 55 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, the Applicant submits that currently amended claim 48 is allowable. Since claims 49-54 depend from claim 48, it is further submitted that those claims are also allowable.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the Applicant believes that the now-pending claims are in condition for allowance. Therefore, the Applicant believes that the entire application is now in condition for allowance, and early and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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